

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2712

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 10528

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, PE

SUBJ: FAR-LEFT TEACHER STRIKE IN SUPPORT OF FISHERMEN

1. THE FAR-LEFT TEACHER UNION CALLED A 24- HOUR STRIKE OF ITS LIMA LOCAL (SUTELM) OCTOBER 17 IN SUPPORT OF STRIKING FISHERMEN. SIMULTANEOUSLY THE FAR-LEFT LABOR FEDERATION OF ANCASH DEPARTMENT (CHIMBOTE) CALLED AN OCTOBER 17 STRIKE TO PROTEST GOP "REPRESSION" OF WORKERS AT THE SIDERPERU STEEL COMPLEX IN CHIMBOTE. A GROUP OF OIL SERVICE WORKERS, WHO GAINED

EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY LAST YEAR BECAUSE OF THE AFFLICTION TERMED UTA OR "WHITE LEPROSY" SUFFERED BY SOME OF THEIR MEMBERS, ALSO CALLED FOR A STRIKE.

2. ACCORDING TO EDUCATION MINISTRY SOURCES, ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF TEACHERS AND PERHAPS A HIGHER PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS HAVE ACTUALLY GONE OUT ON STRIKE. STREET VIOLENCE BETWEEN STUDENTS AND POLICE BROKE OUT THE MORNING OF OCTOBER 17 AT GARCILASO DE LA VEGA UNIVERSIY IN THE VICINITY OF THE EMBASSY RESIDENCE. MOLOTOV COCKTAILS WERE APPARENTLY THROWN AT THE POLICE AND ARRESTS OCCURRED. THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS OF STUDENT CLASHES WITH SECURITY FORCES ELSEWHERE, AND THERE ARE RUMORS THAT STRIKING FISHERMEN MAY ATTEMPT STREET DEMONSTRATIONS IN CALLAO.

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3. COMMENT: THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT THE TEACHERS UNION

IS BEING SUPPORTED BY MAJOR LABOR FEDERATIONS. THE
MOSCOW-LINE CGTP WILL PROBABLY REFRAIN FROM OVERT INVOLVEMENT
IN WHAT IS LIKELY
TO BE AN ABORTIVE EFFORT TO OPENLY CHALLENGE
THE GOP. APRISTA SOURCES TELL THE EMBASSY THAT THE CGTP HAS
PROMISED THE GOVERNMENT THAT IT WILL REMAIN ALOOF FROM THE
FISHERMEN'S DISPUTE. THE CGTP-AFFILIATED BANK EMPLOYEE
UNIONS IN CALLAO, HOWEVER, HAVE CALLED FOR AN OCTOBER 19
STRIKE IN CALLAO, AND THEY HOPE TO COORDINATE THAT STRIKE
WITH TRANSPORT WORKERS THERE. CGTP ACTION SEEMS TO SIGNIFY
BOTH CONTINUED RIVALRY AMONG VARIOUS LEFTIST LABOR GROUPS AS
WELL AS A TWO TRACK COMMUNIST PARTY POLICY OF DIALOGUE WITH
THE GOP AT THE SAME TIME THAT INDIVIDUAL CGTP UNIONS TEST
THE GOVERNMENT IN A SEARCH FOR ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE AND A PROBE
FOR POLITICAL WEAKNESS. ALTHOUGH THE POLICE SHOULD BE ABLE TO
CONTAIN TEACHER/STUDENT UNREST, IN THIS CURRENT STATE OF
ECONOMICALLY BASED DISCONTENT, ANY DISTURBANCE (ESPECIALLY IF
"MARTYRS" ARE PRODUCED) HAS A POTENTIAL FOR SPREADING
DISORDER. THE EMBASSY HAS HEARD THAT THE LIMA/CALLAO CURFEW
MAY BE LOWERED TO 8 P.M. AS THE GOP SEEKS TO WARD OFF ANY
EXTENSION OF LABOR OR STUDENT UNREST.
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